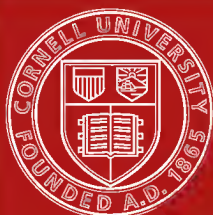


1917 MARYLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION Report of Compulsory School Attendance



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ONE YEAR OF

COMPULSORY SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE

IN

MARYLAND

1916 - 1917

- ¶ Every child is entitled to a common school education.
- ¶ It is unfair to tax a man to educate his neighbor's child and then permit the neighbor to keep that child out of school.
- ¶ The Attendance Law held in school all last year 5,500 children who, but for the Law, would have been absent.
- ¶ Our schools cost annually \$30 per child in attendance.
- ¶ And these 5,500 children got \$165,000 worth of schooling.
- ¶ It cost only \$18,000 to hold them in school.
- ¶ Was this good business for the State?
- ¶ It was. It paid 800%.
- ¶ This pamphlet tells why.

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ONE YEAR OF COMPULSORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF MARYLAND.

The school year closing July 31, 1917, witnessed the completion of one year of compulsory school attendance throughout all the counties of Maryland. The General Assembly in its session of 1916, slightly modified the Compulsory School Attendance Law, which heretofore had applied only to Baltimore City and two counties, and **made it apply to all the counties of the State.** By its provisions, **children seven to thirteen years of age must attend school the full term unless lawfully excused.** Children of thirteen and fourteen years must attend at least one hundred days, and the entire term if not regularly and lawfully employed. Children fifteen and sixteen **who have not finished the elementary school must attend at least one hundred days each year, and the entire term if not regularly and lawfully employed.**

As the law provides that necessary and legal absence may be excused, but does not define what constitutes lawful absence, the State Board of Education, at a meeting August 30, 1917, passed the following by-laws defining lawful absence and some other terms:

LAWFUL ABSENCE.

Absence shall be considered lawful only under the following conditions:

1. Death in the immediate family.
2. Illness of child.
The principal shall require a physician's certificate from the parent or guardian of a child reported continuously absent for illness.
3. Quarantine.
Quarantine shall be understood to mean isolation by order of the local or of the State Board of Health, and a physician's certificate certifying the time of absence required by the quarantine shall be secured by the principal.
4. Court summons.
5. Incapacity. (Physical.)
"Physical Incapacity" shall be interpreted as meaning such a state of ill-health or physical defect as shall render the instruction of the child impracticable in any other than a special class or school; and the attendance officer may require of the parent a certificate to this effect, signed by a reputable physician.

Principal's Monthly Report of Absent Pupils.

School Number.....	District Number.....	Principal.....	Month ending.....
Total Number of pupils enrolled this month.....			Total days' attendance for the month.....
			Average attendance for the month.....

[illegible]

Original 6 x 4 inches. This is Obverse Side

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT OF URGENT CASES

SCHOOL NO. DISTRICT NO. PRINCIPAL DATE

DISTANCE FROM SCHOOL
NORTH SOUTH
EAST WEST
MILES OR BLOCKS

PARENT OR GUARDIAN		DATE OF BIRTH		ATTENDANCE RECORD			CAUSE OF ABSENCE*	GRADE
NAME	FIRST NAME	MONTH	DAY	YEAR	DAYS PRESENT THIS YEAR	DAYS UNLAWFULLY ABSENT SINCE ENROLLED		
ABSENT CHILDREN.								

.....Children from this
NUMBER
are now in regular attendance.

- * Use Code U for Cause of Absence.
- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| U1. Indifference of parent. | U5. Poverty. |
| U2. Indifference of child. | U6. Unlawfully employed. |
| U3. Health of parent. | U7. Truant. |
| U4. Health of others in family. | U8. Suspended. |

Reverse Side

RECORD OF ATTENDANCE OFFICER

METHOD OF TREATMENT	DATE
FORM LETTER No. 1	
FORM LETTER No. 2	
PERSONAL LETTER	
VISITED	
VISITED	
VISITED	

PERSONS INTERVIEWED

RESULT OF INTERVIEW

PROSECUTED

SUBSEQUENT HISTORY

RESULT

6. Incapacity. (Mental.)

"Mental Incapacity" shall be interpreted to mean feeble-mindedness or such nervous disorders as to make it either impossible for such a child to profit by the instruction given in the school, or impractical for the teacher properly to instruct the normal pupils of the school; and the attendance officer may require of the parent a certificate to this effect, signed by a reputable physician.

7. Violent Storms.

"Violent Storms" shall be interpreted to mean only such conditions of the weather as would endanger the health or safety of the child when in transit to and from school.

DEFINITION OF TERMS.

1. "Being thirteen years of age, or fourteen years of age" shall be construed to mean from the thirteenth to the fifteenth birthdays.
2. "Being fifteen years of age, or sixteen years of age" shall be construed to mean from the fifteenth to the seventeenth birthdays.
3. "Elementary School" shall be construed to mean the elementary school course of seven grades, as set forth in the State Course of Study.

The State Superintendent was authorized to prepare and prescribe any blanks and report forms, necessary to promote an efficient and reasonably uniform administration of the law. The two forms reproduced on pages 4 and 5, prepared with the assistance of Mr. John T. Hershner, Chief Attendance Officer for Baltimore County, and Mr. George L. Jones, General Secretary of the Henry Watson Children's Aid Society, were prescribed in September, 1916.

Two letters were written to the county superintendents and attendance officers, explaining the blanks and interpreting the law.

September 20, 1916.

To the County Superintendent:

1. I am sending you herewith copies of some by-laws adopted by the State Board of Education to supplement the Compulsory Attendance Law.

2. I am sending, also, two sample report forms to be used by the teacher or principal in reporting absent pupils to the attendance officer. The monthly report of absent pupils furnishes the names of pupils absent three or more days and such other information about them as will assist the attendance officer in his work. The other form is to be used for reporting urgent cases and such cases as require more immediate and special attention, and should be sent to the attendance officer as occasion demands.

These two forms are prescribed by the authority of the State Board of Education, under Chapter 3, Sec. 13, of the School Law. They may be modified or expanded to include any additional information desired; but the form finally adopted by any county should include, at least, the information called for on these forms. Reports to this office that may be called for later, can be compiled from the reports on these forms, if they are kept on file.

The report forms are offered as samples. After making such modifications as you deem necessary, you should have them duplicated in sufficient quantity to supply each school in the county. I do not expect the forms to be entirely satisfactory. In drafting them the best available experience has been drawn upon, but I am hoping that I may have suggestions for further improving them by another year.

3. Recently I had a conference with Chairman Fox, of the Bureau of Labor and Statistics, in regard to the apparent conflict between the Child Labor Law and the Compulsory Attendance Law. The Bureau of Labor and Statistics has heretofore been authorized to issue employment certificates to fourteen and fifteen-year-old children who had completed the fifth grade. The Compulsory

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to June 1, 1916; provided such children are now regularly and lawfully employed.

I am sending an extra copy of this letter for the information of your Attendance Officer.

Very truly yours,

M. BATES STEPHENS,
State Superintendent.

On the whole the attendance officers used persuasion rather than force, but the magistrates before whom the prosecutions were brought co-operated splendidly with the attendance officers in enforcing the law. However, some questions arose in regard to court procedure in prosecuting offenders and the State Superintendent addressed a letter to the Attorney General for advice and information.

THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT'S LETTER.

I am submitting herewith some questions on Sections 160-172 of Chapter 506 of the Acts of 1916, with reference to procedure before magistrates against parents in the enforcement of the Compulsory School Attendance Law.

1. Is the teacher's daily register evidence of age when the teacher entered the age of the child as reported by the child upon his entrance in school? Is such record of age admissible when the date of birth has been verified continuously by such reports from the same child from year to year? Is the teacher's record admissible as evidence when the age was entered in the same way from the oral or written statements of the parent?

2. If the parent questions the accuracy of the teacher's record can such parent be required to establish the age of the child by birth certificate, baptismal certificate, vital records, or in any other way?

3. Does the School Attendance Officer have authority to serve the warrant in person on the accused and make the arrest?

4. Is it necessary to name the child or children unlawfully absent from school in the warrant drawn for the arrest of a parent, or may the warrant read "who has minor children unlawfully absent from school," without specifying names and ages?

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S OPINION.

I beg to reply to your recent inquiries relative to prosecutions against parents under the Compulsory School Attendance Law, Bagby's Code, Art. 77, Secs. 153-172, as amended by the Act of 1916, Chapter 506, Secs. 156, 162 and 173, which amend Secs. 156, 153A and 173 of Art. 77.

1. The teacher's daily register, which contains the age of the child as given either by the child or by the parent, is not direct legal evidence of the child's age in a prosecution against the parent. If the statement in this register as to the child's age was given by the child, then it cannot legally be used at all against the parent. If the statement was given by the parent, then the register itself is still not direct evidence against the parent.

Weaver vs. Leiman, 52 Md., 708.

Hall vs. Trimble, 104 Md., 323.

In this latter case, however, the teacher herself could testify to what the parent told her was the child's age, and the teacher could refresh her recollection on this point by referring to the register. But it is the teacher's testimony that is admissible, and not the register.

The statement in the register as to the child's age is not made admissible as legal evidence by reason of the fact that it may have been repeatedly verified by the child.

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County	All Children.			White.			Colored.		
	1914 1915	1915 1916	1916 1917	1914 1915	1915 1916	1916 1917	1914 1915	1915 1916	1916 1917
8.	3.7	2.1	11.7	3.9	2.3	11.4	-2.0	-1.2	18.9
9.	-1.3	3.8	10.6	-6	4.0	-6	-2.9	3.2	27.6
10.	1.9	2.7	10.4	-2.6	2.0	4.5	.4	-13.4	21.3
11.	7.6	-2.0	9.6	7.1	0.0	9.0	9.1	-8.3	11.5
12.	1.3	1.4	9.1	1.4	1.9	9.2	-4	-8.8	7.4
13.	6.0	-8.5	8.0	9.7	-11.7	8.2	-27.1	13.2	6.3
14.	-1.6	6.6	7.0	.7	3.1	6.9	-9.4	6.9	7.1
15.	.1	10.4	6.8	5.4	4.1	2.9	-7.3	18.9	11.6
16.	2.2	-4	4.6	1.6	-3	5.2	7.1	-7	-8
17.	2.7	2.8	4.3	2.7	3.0	4.5	3.5	-9.2	-6.1
18.	5.3	3.2	4.2	5.1	4.4	3.6	8.0	0.0	10.6
19.	3.7	-6	4.2	11.4	2.7	2.0	-12.7	-8.4	8.5
20.	.6	1.2	4.0	.8	1.2	4.0	-	-	-
21.	1.4	3.2	1.8	1.8	1.8	.1	-1.5	12.2	11.9
22.	3.1	2.2	-1.1	3.7	.1	-2.8	1.6	7.1	2.4
23.	-4	1.7	-3.8	.1	2.5	-2.5	-1.7	-2	-7.3
All Counties—									
	4.0	1.4	7.5	4.3	1.7	6.0	2.6	-1	14.7

In studying the increases in the daily attendance given below for each county during the last five years, it should be born in mind that there are several factors affecting the increase or decrease in any given county, and the reader is advised not to judge the enforcement of the law in any one county solely by the increase in attendance. A rapidly growing population, or a large number of children heretofore out of school would tend to make an unusual showing. Counties which already had a large percent of their children in school, which have a decreasing population, or part of the schools closed for any length of time would tend to make a poor showing.

As these several factors tend to offset each other, the increase in the State as a whole can be taken as a fair measure of the influence of the School Attendance Law.

TABLE SHOWING AVERAGE ATTENDANCE IN THE SEVERAL COUNTIES BY YEARS AND THE INCREASES OVER PRECEDING YEARS, FOR THE FIVE YEARS ENDING JULY 31, 1917.

County	Year	Average attendance for year	Increase over preceding year	Per Cent. of increase over preceding year
Allegany	1917	9,521	715	7.5
	1916	8,806	297	3.4
	1915	8,509	254	3.0
	1914	8,255	297	3.6
	1913	7,958		
Anne Arundel	1917	5,953	563	9.3
	1916	5,390	87	1.6
	1915	5,303	195	3.7
	1914	5,108	381	7.5
	1913	4,727		

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County	Year	Average attendance for year	Increase over preceding year	Per Cent. of increase over preceding year
Harford	1917	3,936	95	2.4
	1916	3,841	41	1.1
	1915	3,800	41	1.1
	1914	3,759	97	2.6
	1913	3,662		
Howard	1917	2,497	273	11.4
	1916	2,224	222	10.0
	1915	2,002	168	8.4
	1914	1,834	—132	—7.2
	1913	1,966		
Kent	1917	2,585	276	10.7
	1916	2,309	—95	—4.1
	1915	2,404	131	5.5
	1914	2,273	—26	—1.1
	1913	2,299		
Montgomery	1917	4,326	—195	—4.5
	1916	4,521	81	1.8
	1915	4,440	39	0.9
	1914	4,401	195	4.5
	1913	4,206		
Prince George	1917	5,886	36	6.1
	1916	5,525	53	1.0
	1915	5,472	389	7.1
	1914	5,083	207	4.1
	1913	4,876		
Queen Anne's	1917	2,463	188	7.6
	1916	2,275	—140	—6.2
	1915	2,415	199	8.3
	1914	2,216	58	2.6
	1913	2,158		
St Mary's	1917	2,488	454	18.3
	1916	2,034	—16	—0.8
	1915	2,050	28	1.4
	1914	2,022	—25	—1.2
	1913	2,047		
Somerset	1917	4,211	455	10.8
	1916	3,756	168	4.5
	1915	3,588	245	6.9
	1914	3,343	—99	—3.0
	1913	3,442		
Talbot	1917	3,094	248	8.0
	1916	2,846	—41	—1.4
	1915	2,887	50	1.7
	1914	2,837	—18	—0.6
	1913	2,855		

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dustrial conditions produced by the war was also felt in all counties.

Several counties reported some interesting special feature in reply to question No. 7, but very few suggestions were received for amending the law, in response to question No. 8. The replies to questions Nos. 9, 10, and 11 are summarized in the foregoing table.

It would seem that the variation in the distribution of the attendance officer's time between office and field work is hardly justifiable. In some counties the attendance officer should have spent more days in the field and visited more homes of absent children. The attendance officers who got into more homes and studied more cases at first hand developed more school sentiment and usually secured better results in enforcing the law. It is probable that inadequate means of travel, and in some counties poor roads, tended to limit the amount of traveling.

The replies are of so much interest that most of them are printed in full. Each county being left during the year to meet its attendance problems largely in its own way, the reports show considerable variation in the methods used, as well as in the results obtained. The reader will be interested in comparing the following accounts by counties with the statistical tables of school attendance:

ALLEGANY COUNTY.

	10 yrs.	11 yrs.	12 yrs.	13 yrs.	14 yrs.	15 yrs.	16 yrs.	17 yrs.
1.	48	19	10	0	1	1	0	1
			12 yrs.	13 yrs.	14 yrs.	15 yrs.	16 yrs.	17 yrs.
2. Attending 100 days.....			897	862	734	370	202	92
Less than 100 days.....			128	116	145	87	37	15

The great majority of the pupils enumerated above who have not attended the full 100 days were boys in the rural schools, who stopped to work on their farms. Just about that time the papers began to surmise that the Legislature would possibly permit boys to work on the farms, so I found it very difficult to compel them to attend without using the drastic features of the law, and did not feel this action was advisable at that time.

3. We had about 50 pupils and their parents brought before the Juvenile Court, and the magistrates of the county, who, after interpreting the law, allowed them to go on a promise that they would attend school regularly. This was done without any cost to the parents or the county, and in most cases was very effective.

4. We have done some special relief work, such as arranging through the local Charity Boards and individuals for funds to secure clothing and shoes. We also succeeded in getting friends to assist us in furnishing clothing and shoes for a few children whose parents could not afford to buy them, these cases occurring in places that had no local Charity Boards.

5. I have done considerable work among the patrons of the schools, have attended a number of public meetings, and have visited a great many lodges, in

every instance urging upon parents the necessity of complying with the law.

6. The chief difficulty I find is the indifference of the parents and guardians about the education of their children.

7. Whatever success I have had has been due, in my judgment, to the fact that I have been able to make the boys who have been violating the law feel that I was their friend. I thereby gained their confidence, and at the same time avoided the attitude of an officer of the law who wanted to make trouble for them.

I have, moreover, kept in touch with the boys who were truants, following them up every week. We have had the most persistent cases send us a report from the teacher every Friday, showing how many days they were at school that week; these reports were brought to the office, or mailed to me, or taken either to the Juvenile Court Judge or to the magistrate. In this way I have been able to see or hear from the boys every week.

8. I would suggest the following amendment to Section 162, page 78, of the School Law. The law now reads as follows:

Any person who has a child under his control and who fails to comply with any of the provisions of this section, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and shall be fined not exceeding five dollars for each offense.

I would add, "Or, upon failure to pay the fine, ——— days in the County Jail."

9. I have been in the field almost constantly from September 18th to June 1st.

10. I have not worked in the office more than one full day in each week.

11. I have made 643 school visits, have visited 867 homes, and have talked personally to at least 1,000 individuals about their children's attendance at school.

In addition to this, I have sent out and delivered in person a copy of the attendance law to every patron of the schools, both public and parochial, and have sent through the mails to parents and guardians 2,618 personal or circular letters.

THOS. H. MORGAN,
Attendance Officer, Allegany County.

ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY.

1. This would be rather hard to answer at all accurately, as I did not receive my appointment until November 8th. The compulsory law had just gone into effect; and as the newspapers were full of what was going to be done, it is almost impossible to estimate the number of children that this law forced into the schools.

2. No data.

3. There were no arrests made in this county, as we thought it best not to antagonize unless the case was an extreme one. I found very little trouble with the parents or guardians when they were approached in the proper manner and the law explained to them.

4. I have kept in touch with the District Nurse when the case was close enough to her. In the more rural districts I have gone to the different women's organizations throughout the county; and while these cases have been few, we have never failed to get the child or children back into school.

5. There have been organized teachers' and patrons' clubs wherever it was practical.

6. Ignorance of the parent or guardian.

7. The parochial and private schools in Annapolis give me quite a lot of trouble in that, when I pick up a child on the street he or she will invariably say, "I go to such and such a school, and my teacher is sick or away." There have been so many cases of this kind that I could spend my entire time in Annapolis and be kept busy. In the rural districts I have very little trouble; but where the smaller children have a distance of over a mile to go over such bad roads as we had last winter it was impossible to keep a good attendance. This last winter the lower end of Anne Arundel County was swept with measles, and, indeed, a large part of the upper end. Since January 1st I have traveled in my machine on school business alone 3,780 miles. Have paid 74 visits to white schools and 22 to colored schools.

8. If all the counties of Southern Maryland have as large a negro population as Anne Arundel, I would advise an officer for each race, as one person can hardly attend to both properly. The negroes are almost impossible, as you may put them in school one day and they are out the next.

9. Seventy-eight full days spent in the field.

10. Thirty-eight full days in the office.

11. Thirty-one visits to white families and eighteen to colored families.

BENJ. WATKINS, JR.

Attendance Officer, Anne Arundel County.

BALTIMORE COUNTY.

1. Since compulsory school attendance has been in effect for several years* in Baltimore County, there are very few children who have not been placed in school. Only ten children were found this year who had never entered any school.

2. It is impossible for me to answer No. 2 with any degree of accuracy, owing to the fact that we did not have the teachers make the usual quarterly reports.

3. The number of arrests for the year was 122; the number brought to trial, 108; and but 14 failed to appear when summoned, for various reasons. All cases were found guilty.

Seventy-five dollars was the total amount of fines, and the approximate number of fines suspended was 15. This does not include the amount of fines which I understand were suspended in the case against the Gathmann Company, which was convicted for unlawfully employing about 50 girls under 18 years of age, 20 of whom were under 16 years of age. These cases have not been included in the number of arrests for the year.

4. It has been our policy to relieve cases of poverty as quickly as time would permit. It was not possible to visit all cases reported; however, I should say that at least 50 families were visited by Miss Lucas, Agent for the Children's Aid Society, and myself, and relief given in each case. Many other cases were referred to the Children's Aid Society and also to the Federated Charities, whose reports I do not have in writing. A number of children were taken to hospitals for examination and treatment. Many homes have been made more

*Elsewhere in this pamphlet is an extended account of the five years of compulsory school attendance in Baltimore County.

sanitary by the co-operation of the Juvenile Court Agent, Miss Johnson, and Miss Lucas, of the Children's Aid Society.

5. The work has been largely one of education. Every opportunity to have personal interviews with parents or their friends has been made use of. Public meetings have been held in the school buildings; addresses have been made to Patrons' Clubs on the subject, and personal visits were made to homes.

6. One of the chief difficulties in the enforcement of the law is the lack of a provision by which the attendance officer might have children examined where there is doubt as to the truth of the statement of the parent in reference to the health of the child. Poor health was given more frequently than any other excuse for keeping a child out of school; and this excuse has a strong effect upon magistrates in prosecutions.

7. There are two special features of work in addition to answer No. 5, which, it seems to me, are worth while:

First. The fact that we are scattered over such a wide territory makes visiting rather difficult. As an experiment, I tried in six of our largest schools the holding of meetings of delinquent parents, teachers and attendance officers, sending out from 30 to 35 notices to parents of each school, giving them their choice of either attending these meetings or appearing at a later date before a magistrate. About 95 per cent. of the parents attended the meetings, and the results were rather satisfactory.

Second. Perhaps the second piece of educational work in importance, to my mind, was settling disputes arising between teachers and parents, because of grievances, either real or imaginary. Not a single case has ever been brought before the County Board of Education for adjustment, but practically all have been settled to the satisfaction of the parents and teacher.

8. No suggestion.

9 and 10. These questions cannot be answered separately by me. Approximately one-half to two-thirds of my time last year was given to this work. I spent a part of the day in the office—the rest of the day, generally until late in the evening, I spent in the field.

Miss Ruth Jones was appointed Assistant Attendance Officer last September and assigned to the work at Highlandtown. Miss Jones reports 400 recorded cases, 1200 visits, and about 167 letters. She also accomplished a great deal in this community in the way of social work.

I personally held, approximately, 1100 interviews, made over 900 visits to parents—not including my numerous visits to the schools—and sent out about 800 letters.

J. T. HERSHNER,
Chief Attendance Officer, Baltimore County.

CALVERT COUNTY.

1. Owing to inadequate reports of teachers, I cannot answer Questions 1 and 2 until after I see their school registers.

3. No arrests were made.

4. We have had no such cases.

5. Copy of attendance law was given each parent and personal interviews with parents were held.

6. Unwillingness to comply with the attendance law.
7. Have visited the schools and homes of many of the parents, and secured the co-operation of most of them.
8. No suggestions.
9. Forty full days in the field.
10. Work did not require any full day in the office; was in the office part of a great many days.
11. Thirty visits to families during the year.

W. H. TALBOTT,
Attendance Officer, Calvert County.

CAROLINE COUNTY.

1. Impossible to answer, as the teachers have the data. In most cases the children came in through the teacher's message, without a visit from the Attendance Officer.

WHITE.

	12 yrs.	13 yrs.	14 yrs.	15 yrs.	16 yrs.	17 yrs.
2. Attending 100 days.....	225	233	190	113	72	43
Less than 100 days.....	96	88	72	61	44	6

COLORED.

Attending 100 days.....	67	45	48	22	12	6
Less than 100 days.....	49	48	42	29	18	3

3. No arrests.
4. In many homes where children were out on account of poverty, clothes have been furnished. Children's eyes have been examined and glasses provided.
5. Regular school attendance has been discussed at many of our Patrons' meetings. In every case where homes were visited, the Attendance Officer made a point of explaining the law and the necessity of regular attendance. In most cases it was favorably received after being understood.
6. My chief difficulty this year has been our bad roads, in cases where children live some distance from school (as in many cases they do). Another difficulty has been the unusual amount of sickness and poverty.
7. In my work this year, as you will see above, I have made no arrests. I may have been too lenient, but I have felt that the people must be educated up to the law and I have tried to make them *want* to send their children rather than force them to do so. Another year it may be necessary to make arrests, as in some cases that is the only way. These, however, are few, and in the great majority of cases I have found that after talking with the parents they want their children to have the advantage of our schools, but that circumstances have prevented regular attendance. These circumstances have generally been sickness or poverty.

8. I would not suggest at present any amendment to the School Law.
9. I have been about 148 days doing attendance work, in conjunction with social work.
10. Have spent about 55 days in the office.
11. About 400 visits to families and 150 persons in interviewed in the office.

HELEN B. WISONG,
Attendance Officer, Caroline County.

CARROLL COUNTY.

1. I do not know of any.

	12 yrs.	13 yrs.	14 yrs.	15 yrs.	16 yrs.	17 yrs.
2. Attending 100 days.....	590	416	360	301	156	120
Less than 100 days.....	7	30	75	103	130	70

3. Number of arrests, 44; number brought to trial, 3; number of convictions, 1; approximate total of fines and costs, \$81.60; approximate total fines and costs suspended, \$25.50.

4. Their wants were supplied by the County Board of Education.

5. Organizing Parent Teachers' Associations.

6. Opposition to the present School Attendance Law.

7.

8. By reducing the age limit of the present law.

9. Number of full days in the field, 90.

10. Number of days spent in office, 50.

11. Number of visits to families, about 150; number of persons interviewed on account of absent children, 200.

A. J. BEMILLER,

Attendance Officer, Carroll County.

I wish to add a statement to the foregoing report. I believe that Carroll County offers some radically different social, as well as educational, problems from those of almost any other county in the State. We have a rich, comfortable, self-satisfied population of agricultural people. They made their money off their farms on which they are now living, or they have moved to town and placed their children on the farms. They managed to secure this without much education, and they do not see the necessity for very much education. In view of their attitude and their economic progress and satisfaction, they resent any interference from educational authorities. We have no large towns permeated with an industrial or cultured class of people whose influence offsets the aforementioned attitude toward public affairs.

I believe that our people largely are convinced that an elementary education is a great necessity and a great benefit, but they fail to appreciate that constant attendance at school is what brings results. We have a very large proportion of children, especially country children, who are behind their grade. You know the result of such a situation. The time comes when these children are ashamed to go to school or become large enough to help on the farm, and, in consequence, they are detained from school more and more.

Now the new compulsory law, in my judgment, was very badly outlined in view of this circumstance, for its application in a very thorough manner would require these over-age children to go to school until they are seventeen years old. Many of them are only in the third and fourth grades, and of course resent the whole matter seriously. In my judgment, it would have been much better if the law had been a graduated law—say for the past year all children up to the age of thirteen would have to attend school, and next year all children up to the age of fourteen would have to attend school, and the following year all those up to fifteen, and the next year those up to sixteen. I am inclined to think that more option should be given to children in the sixteenth year in some form or other.

In reference to the enclosed report, I believe that we have executed the

attendance features of the law in a conservative manner. A radical application would have caused a great deal of difficulty. I do not believe that there will be very much opposition to the application of the law next fall, as quite a good many of those over-age and under-grade pupils will have gotten out from the meshes of the law, which will certainly relieve the tension.

MARTIN S. H. UNGER,
County Superintendent, Carroll County.

CECIL COUNTY.

1. Practically all the children in this county, ten years of age and over, have attended school at some time. The great trouble here has been in irregular attendance and withdrawal from school at an early age. I know of but six above ten years of age who were brought into school this year for the first time.

Two 12 years; one 14 years; three 16 years.

	12 yrs.	13 yrs.	14 yrs.	15 yrs.	16 yrs.	17 yrs.
2. Attending 100 days.....	264	276	138	48	32	48
Less than 100 days.....	130	203	118	50	65	32
3. No arrests were made.						

4. About 400 garments, including shoes and rubbers, have been distributed throughout the county by the three branches of the Needlework Guild of America. These societies have responded liberally in every case of poverty reported to me. The Board of Health has also been helpful in the unsanitary cases. I have had no cases of poor health among the *very* poor children.

5. In cases where children were irregular in attendance, I visited the parents and talked with them, and in nearly every case found them reasonable in their views, and apparently anxious to have their children educated.

6. Poverty is the chief difficulty which I have met this year; the scarcity of labor has also made it necessary to keep children out of school to help at home. The long distance that a great many of the country children have to walk in order to attend school is an important factor in the irregular attendance in this county.

7. My work this year has consisted of visiting the parents, talking with them, and trying to get them to see the necessity of having their children educated. A great many people who had felt the law to be unjust before talking to me, could see the good to be accomplished after having the law explained to them. With the foundation that has been laid this year, I see no reason why the attendance should not keep on increasing each year.

8. I think the age limit of seventeen years is a little high. A child who has attended school regularly up to thirteen years of age, and then attends 100 days for two more years, and has not completed the seventh grade, will, in all probability, never complete it. It seems to me that a child of this kind would be better to have regular employment.

9. About seventy-six full days in the field.

10. All the remainder of the school year, including Saturdays, and two weeks after school closed were spent in the office.

11. About 400 visits to parents and guardians. I have also interviewed a great many people at the office and by telephone, and have written many letters in explanation of different points of the law.

LIDIE D. REYNOLDS,
Attendance Officer, Cecil County.

CHARLES COUNTY.

While it has been a pleasure to be associated with this work, the results obtained are far from what we would have them, owing to various reasons which we hope to show below; yet I am not willing to concede that our efforts have not given birth to something worthy of consideration.

I think you will agree with me that it is hardly in the nature of things for the reports of the first year to give a true idea of the good accomplished.

Much of the data submitted is taken from records of my field book, as it occurred from day to day. I trust it will at least be sufficient to give an idea as to conditions as they materialized during the first year.

While we do feel that something has been accomplished, it is quite clear that much time and energy must be expended before we, as school officials, have succeeded in educating the people of our county up to seeing the law as a means to better social conditions and as something really worth while.

I have spent much time in appealing to our people throughout the county to endeavor to understand the importance, intent, and true purpose of the law, and while we have met, here and there, slight opposition, I think it is possible to crystallize public sentiment in its favor and accomplish more another year.

We have consistently appealed to the pupils in the various schools and the patrons out of the school to make every effort to live up to the law as far as possible.

I have interviewed ministers of the Gospel of all denominations, and numbers of our representative people not directly connected with our schools, soliciting their active and moral support, feeling that in the initial step, it was not expedient to enforce the law to such an extent as to make it reactionary. Our teachers, with very few exceptions, have given us full co-operation. It is very evident that they have long since realized that poor attendance upon school, owing in many cases to indifferent parents, has been a potent factor in warping their work.

The use of printed attendance cards has helped, in a measure, to stimulate conditions.

In a limited way, we have secured assistance for a few children out of school on account of poverty. In three families only, have we found absolute need for financial aid. Clothing and lunch were furnished these by benevolent school patrons.

Number days active field work.....	108
Number days active office work.....	42
Attendance upon Teachers' Meetings.....	8
Number visits to indifferent parents.....	65
Number visits to representative people in behalf of school conditions.....	20
Number arrests made.....	1

(This pupil was paroled.)

Approximate number of children over ten years brought into school this year for the first time:

(White)	50
(Colored)	75
	12 yrs. 13 yrs. 14 yrs. 15 yrs. 16 yrs. 17 yrs.
Attending 100 days.....	140 120 96 55 17 6
Less than 100 days.....	9 8 8 12 2 2

WHITE.

Total enrollment for year 1914-15.....	1766
Total enrollment for year 1915-16.....	1843
Total enrollment for year 1916-17.....	2011

COLORED.

Total enrollment for year 1914-15.....	1824
Total enrollment for year 1915-16.....	1867
Total enrollment for year 1916-17.....	1897

As to Average Attendance:

WHITE.

Average attendance for 1914-15.....	1142
Average attendance for 1915-16.....	1113
Average attendance for 1916-17.....	1368

COLORED.

Average attendance for 1914-15.....	956
Average attendance for 1915-16.....	923
Average attendance for 1916-17.....	1073

Relative to the chief difficulty which we have met in our efforts to make the law a success much might be said. Many of our patrons reside in districts where the public highways during the winter school term are well-nigh impassable; especially was this true during the past winter. This, perhaps, militated against the success of the law as did no other single factor. As previously stated, we are looking for better results another year.

As to an amendment to the law, it does not appear at present under our local conditions that an amendment would improve conditions. I cannot agree with the minority who argue that the law interferes with labor conditions. Where is the father or mother of a boy who has reached his thirteenth year, who is not willing to school him one hundred days, especially when we do not ask him to begin until the first of November?

W. B. BILLINGSLEY,

Attendance Officer, Charles County.

DORCHESTER COUNTY.

1. I do not know of any. Under threat of arrest, several children of eight years were vaccinated and sent to school for the first time.

	12 yrs.	13 yrs.	14 yrs.	15 yrs.	16 yrs.	17 yrs.
2. Attending 100 days.....	367	344	223	178	128	68
Less than 100 days.....	70	94	112	116	68	66

3. The only arrests made by me were brought before Police Justice James, Cambridge.

One incorrigible truant was committed to the Maryland School for Boys. This boy was absolutely beyond the control of his parents, and had been arrested several times before for petty thefts. He would run away from home, stay out at night, and had caused them a great deal of trouble. Every social agency in town had tried to do something for this child without result; so it seemed best to send him to a reform school.

The next arrest was the case of a deaf boy. His mother had been told by the physician that if his tonsils and adenoids were removed the deafness might

be cured. I had her take him twice to the hospital here for treatment, but she would not allow the visiting specialist to operate. After waiting several months, I had her arrested and compelled her to take the boy to Baltimore for treatment. I had a social worker from the Maryland Children's Aid meet them and take them to a dispensary where the operation was performed. I had the papers made out to send the boy to the School for Deaf, but the doctor told her that the boy might be sufficiently improved by autumn to attend the public school, so he was brought home. His health is somewhat improved, but the hearing no better. I would like to send this boy to Frederick, but am sure he is tubercular, and that may keep him out. I will be advised by Mr. Forrester.

In the spring I had a woman come before Justice James. Her son was kept out of school most of the winter under various pretexts. Arrangements were made to send him to the Junior Republic, but in view of the scarcity of labor in the county I decided to try him on a farm here, with the understanding that he was to be allowed to make 100 days at school next winter. He is now working, but if he does not go to school in the fall, we shall do something with him.

4. Co-operating with the District Nurse Association and Associated Charities, I am sure that over fifty children were given shoes and clothes, thus helping them to make better attendance. Conditions here were very bad last winter on account of the river being closed by ice and the oyster business shut down for many weeks. People were thrown out of work, and many families were helped who had never before called on the charity organizations. I was not able to do anything along this line for children in the country, though I found many cases just as needy.

One tubercular mother was sent to the hospital, and the girl who was staying home to wait on her was gotten back to school.

5. Parents were visited in their homes, and I made public addresses at School Improvement Associations at Cambridge, Eldorado, Madison and the Women's Club of Cambridge.

6. The employment of child labor, legally and illegally.

7. The first week in September, I visited and talked in every school in Cambridge, took names of pupils who had made a poor record last year and had not yet enrolled. These were visited at once and gotten in school. I spent a great deal of time in East Cambridge, where either parents or children were working in the canning-houses. I soon began getting returns from country schools—lists of children who had not enrolled. Letters were written to all parents of children under 13 years of age, with copies of the law enclosed, explaining that older children working on farms or in canning-houses on vacation permits, could remain at work until November 1st when they must enter school. Almost daily visits were made to the Bureau of Labor and Statistics, restoring permits to older boys who had been wrongfully deprived of them before November 1st. Many of these boys had been working a year or more, and had no intention of returning to school. Later the State Superintendent of Schools made a ruling that these pupils could not be forced back to school; but in the meantime our Board had provided them with a night school which has filled a great need.

A few children of widowed mothers and other cases of extreme poverty were allowed to go to work and attend the night school.

No permits have been given to children in Cambridge unless signed by me,

stating that the child has fulfilled the requirements of the school law. We accepted the night school as the requirement in many cases.

Schools in town were constantly visited to see that pupils visited had reported at school. The same pupils were always more or less delinquent, showing trouble and lack of co-operation in the home.

Of course the follow-up work in the country schools could not be so closely looked after. I hope to work out a better plan of co-operation with the teachers for next year. The monthly reports do not seem to fill the need entirely, as they permit too long a time to elapse before the case is reported. Some counties have an "urgent case" blank which I shall use next year; and we are all working on various form letters which will help the work.

8. I think the standard of grades should be the same for Baltimore City and the counties. If a child is required to make only 100 days after he is 13 years of age, he might hope to make the fifth grade before he stops altogether, but hardly the seventh. Of course a child who attends school regularly until he is 13 should be somewhere near the seventh grade; but the country child can not, in the nature of things, attend as regularly as the city child, and very few of them are beyond the fourth or fifth grade at 14 years of age. I wish the law were more stringent in regard to the feeble-minded.

9. I was in the country forty-three days. I visited all the schools in the county, both white and colored, but Elliott's Island, Holland's Island and three others. I visited 175 families in the country, and crab houses, fish houses, oyster houses, and shirt factories, looking for children working there, or to talk with the parents. I paid 417 visits to families in Cambridge, and my work took me to every industry in the town. My work in town was done entirely by walking (the machine was used only in the country), and Cambridge covers a good deal of ground. I always tried to spend some time in the afternoons in the office, writing letters, etc.

10. I did not spend many full days in the office but, when in town, tried to divide the work between office and visiting as stated in No. 9.

11. Answered by Nos. 9 and 10.

M. JEANIE BRYAN,

Attendance Officer, Dorchester County.

FREDERICK COUNTY.

1. By enforcing school attendance during the years ending July 31, 1915, and July 31, 1916, nearly all children of school age were enrolled. I know of no pupils over ten years of age who were brought into school the past year for the first time. There may have been a few colored children. For this reason, given above, the increase in attendance the past year over the preceding two years has not been great.

2. The accompanying lists give the number of children of each age beginning with twelve years who made one hundred days' attendance, and also the number who made less than one hundred days' attendance.

WHITE.

	12 yrs.	13 yrs.	14 yrs.	15 yrs.	16 yrs.	17 yrs.
Attending 100 days.....	736	675	515	371	219	151
Less than 100 days.....	170	172	186	154	112	43

COLORED.

Attending 100 days.....	59	50	32	13	8	2
Less than 100 days.....	15	40	47	44	25	7

3. Knowing that arbitrary enforcement of law does not solve any problem, only a few arrests were made. For two years the Annandale School had been closed and the children transported to Emmitsburg. Last year the patrons asked to have their school re-opened and refused to send their children to Emmitsburg. The Board ordered three of the principal offenders to be arrested; but upon reconsideration, the school re-opened and the cases dropped. The fourth man arrested was fined five dollars and costs, but took an appeal, and the case never came before the court. The fifth person was fined five dollars and costs. This person would neither pay the fine nor take an appeal. Not wishing to see the man go to jail because he had a very sick child at home, the Attendance Officer paid the fine and took the man home to his sick child. In the case of the sixth, judgment was suspended upon the person's promising to comply with the law.

4. Children out of school on account of poverty, poor health, or unsanitary conditions at home have been reported to the proper authorities. We have a number of charitable organizations whose members are always willing and ready to help those who help themselves. The Attendance Officer has been aided a great deal in his work by Miss Garner, the Visiting Nurse, and by Miss Munn, who represents the Children's Aid Society in Frederick County. Both of these ladies are very capable, and we find that by co-operating, the work of each is made more efficient.

5. Different methods have been used to educate parents to the need of regular school attendance. The teachers are urged to visit the homes as often as possible in order that they may fully understand the conditions existing in the home, and the child's environment. These visits of the teacher are supplemented by visits from the Attendance Officer. We try to make the parents feel that we are their friends and that we are doing our best to assist them. Parents are cordially invited to attend community meetings, which, last year, were held at schoolhouses in different parts of the county.

6. One difficulty which I met in my work, was to get large boys and girls who were much too old for their grade to enroll. These pupils are not deficient, but are retarded because they never had opportunities. Some of these children broke off their school relations a year or two ago; and to persuade them to return and join classes composed of children much younger than themselves is a trying problem. Another problem which I was not able to solve was to have certain farmers' boys attend school at certain times. These farmers argue the question, not from the view-point of cheap labor, for they would cheerfully hire help if they could, but from the point of absolute lack of labor.

7. One special feature of my work was to require all teachers to send in monthly reports of all unexcused absences and to note fully the efforts they had made to secure more regular attendance. After securing these reports, the slackers would receive first aid.

8. By persevering in a campaign of education, and by a more tactful enforcement of the law in the more flagrant cases, we believe the present Compulsory School Attendance Law will meet the approbation of school officials, teachers, patrons and pupils.

9. I have been doing attendance work in the field about one hundred and forty full days.

10. I have done about forty full days of office work.

11. I have no record of the number of visits to families and the number of persons interviewed. I visited one hundred and thirty-two schools, a number of them several times, and, I suppose, an average of two or three families in each school.

F. D. HARSHMAN,

Attendance Officer, Frederick County.

GARRETT COUNTY.

1. The approximate number of children of each age beginning with ten years who were in school this year for the first time was: Age ten, 15 children; age eleven, 12 children; age twelve, 10 children; age thirteen, 6 children; age fourteen, 4 children; age fifteen, 3 children; age sixteen, 2 children. Total, 52.

	12 yrs.	13 yrs.	14 yrs.	15 yrs.	16 yrs.	17 yrs.
2. Attending 100 days.....	276	228	172	79	41	16
Less than 100 days.....	135	180	201	158	129	44

3. Eight arrests; eight brought to trial; seven convictions; one boy sent to Maryland School for Boys. Total of fines and costs, \$32.28. No costs or fines suspended.

4. I have enlisted the help of the community where they live, and of the County Commissioners; and have also tried to have their church help them, when they belong to church. I have helped about forty families in this way.

5. Nothing more than that I have talked to the parents of children that were lax in attendance and tried to show them the value of education and the importance of sending their children regularly to school.

6. The chief difficulties that I have met in my work have been bad weather, children having unusual distances to come to school, and some parents keeping their children from school to work.

7. I really have no special feature in my work that I have followed out. In the fall I visited as many of the schools as possible, distributing copies of the Compulsory School Law to every child in the school, leaving extra copies and instructing the teacher to see that every child in the community of school age got a copy of the law and that they take it home and have their parents read it and make themselves thoroughly familiar with it. On my second visit to the school I checked up the attendance; and I tried to visit the homes and talk the matter over with the parents of the children that were absent or lax in attendance.

8. The School Attendance Law as it now stands is entirely satisfactory to this county.

9. Field work, about 125 full days.

10. Office work, about 112 full days.

11. About 77 visits to families, and about 240 persons interviewed on account of absent children.

B. H. WILEY,

Attendance Officer, Garrett County.

HARFORD COUNTY.

1. I do not know how many children of ten years or more were brought into our schools for the first time. Possibly forty white children and more than that number of colored children. I cannot classify them into age groups, because no records were kept either by the teachers or myself.

	12 yrs.	13 yrs.	14 yrs.	15 yrs.	16 yrs.	17 yrs.
2. Attending 100 days.....	419	412	324	215	119	51
Less than 100 days.....	110	113	115	88	49	18

3. Six arrests were made. Three trials with convictions; two cases confessed guilt and were paroled. One case of truancy brought before the Juvenile Court. The offender is doing well under direction of the Court. Fines and costs collected amounted to about \$20.00. Suspended costs were probably \$10.00.

4. Unsanitary conditions, poverty and sick cases have, by request, been handed over to the probation officer of the Juvenile Court, who has local workers scattered throughout the county. In cases of urgent need, these local workers are put to work at once and relief given. The probation officer investigates all cases reported to her. She has had a number of children treated for defective vision, deafness, adenoids, etc. This work has been done by specialists, either free, or for a nominal fee. I find my work fits in with that of the probation officer, and we are working in perfect harmony.

5. I have attended a number of parents' meetings and talked with them as a body; but generally my work has been of a personal nature. I have talked with the individuals and pointed out the advantages of regular attendance, if progress is to be made. In addition to this personal work, the probation officer has held special meetings throughout the county at which subjects pertaining to child-welfare have been discussed, and I am sure the subject of Education has not been neglected. I hope during the coming year to do more than I did last year. I also attended nearly every teachers' meeting held in the county and discussed the Compulsory Law with the teachers.

6. Ignorance or indifference on the part of parent or guardian. Poverty in a few cases. Scarcity of labor in farming communities.

7. I have taken up a number of suspension cases during the year. In every case except one, I have succeeded in getting pupil and teacher into right relations. This part of the work appeals to me.

8. The present School Law would be more popular and more easily enforced if only five grades were required, and the age limit were 15 and not 17 years.

9. About 130 days in the field.

10. About 75 days in the office.

11. I think I have interviewed from 350 to 400 persons on the subject of non-attendance or irregular attendance at school—some of them several times.

FRANK DAVIS,

Attendance Officer, Harford County.

HOWARD COUNTY.

1. No data.

2. No data.

3. The number of arrests made was three; in one case a fine of five dollars and costs was imposed, but payment suspended if child were sent in and kept in

school. In the second case, the fine was suspended, but the costs of the case (\$2.60) paid. The parent in the other case agreed to send and keep child in school, and the case was dismissed.

4. Through the aid of the representative of the Children's Aid Society, the worst cases of poverty and poor health have been cared for. In one case, parent was sent to Eudowood, food and clothing were furnished younger children, and they were kept in school. In fact, all bad cases in this district were most carefully looked after by this representative, without whose aid I could not have accomplished the work done.

5. I have attended the patrons' meetings of the county and explained the requirements of the law and in what manner these requirements were to be met. In my visits to the homes, I have carefully explained in the same way. Copies of the law were scattered broadcast among the children of the county in September, and in some cases the teacher required a note written her after the law had been read. The purpose of this note was to satisfy us that the law had been read; and many of the notes brought out the parents' ideas on compulsory education. In the coming year I want to make sure that the parents do know the provisions of this law much more thoroughly, because in the cases already cited, there were many things of which the parents seemed ignorant.

6. The chief difficulty I met in my work this year was the fact that the farmers would not send their boys in promptly on November 1st, and that there is no adequate way in which cases of poverty can be cared for. In many localities it was only by personal subscription that I could furnish clothes and stationery for the poor children. There were few, in some cases no societies connected with the church that could aid in this particular work. It is my desire in the coming year to establish many School Improvement Societies; and I want a feature of these societies to be the caring for cases of this kind.

7. The special feature of my work this year has been trying to make the people of Howard County understand that the Compulsory Education Law was a law passed by the State of Maryland for the improvement of education throughout the State, and whether they approved or disapproved it, they were expected to observe it just as any other law passed in the same manner; whether I have accomplished this or not will be evident on November 1st.

8. If the present school attendance law were so amended that, instead of an age limit, we had a grade requirement, I think it would be much more satisfactory. Then if a child knew, by completing the eighth grade, he would be free to take his place in the world of workers, he would probably strain every effort to accomplish that work; as it is now he can just dawdle his time away until he reaches the age limit which sets him at liberty. I also think that sickness of parent is a lawful excuse for absence of child; though this is not a part of the law, it is one feature of the suggestions made to attendance officers to which I object. I also think a monthly report should be made by the attendance officer embodying those things on which he was expected to report at the end of the year. Then he would be in close touch with the teachers and in a position to secure information requested.

9. Approximately, I have spent about one hundred and twenty days in the field doing attendance work. Had the roads of Howard County been in better condition and our winter a little less severe on our roads, I should probably have been able to do more field work than the one hundred and twenty days. This

time was not spent entirely in visiting parents in regard to delinquent children, because on the same trip I would visit a school, do the supervision work in first three grades, and visit parents reported by teacher as being urgent cases needing attention; and it is pretty nearly impossible to divide the time spent in the duties of both supervisor and attendance officer.

10. About one hundred and ten days of office work. This office work included Saturdays up to July 28th, 1917.

11. The visits made to parents, I estimate at about three hundred; but having no exact record, I may have under-estimated.

The number of persons interviewed on account of absent children I cannot approximate, because the only record I have is reported on urgent report cards, and this number represents not one hundredth of the persons interviewed. This report includes no record whatever of the work done in negro schools, as I kept no record of what was done in them.

ELIZABETH MEADE,

Attendance Officer, Howard County.

KENT COUNTY.

1. Ten years old or more who were brought into school this year for the first time:

				10 yrs.	11 yrs.	12 yrs.	13 yrs.	Total.		
				4	3	3	2	12		
				12 yrs.	13 yrs.	14 yrs.	15 yrs.	16 yrs.	17 yrs.	Total.
2.	Attending	100 days	269	226	187	106	58	28	874	
	Less than	100 days	124	136	143	145	116	42	706	

3. The number of arrests is 6. The number brought to trial, 5. Approximate total fines and costs, \$8.20. Approximate total fines and costs suspended, \$2.60.

4. Two branches of the Needle Work Guild of America have been organized in the county to provide clothing for children who have not the proper clothing for attending school. About 300 new articles of clothing and 75 pieces of second-hand clothing have been given.

Arrangements were made for two pupils to go to a hospital; one had an operation on the ear, and the other had tonsils removed.

Ice and milk were supplied to a sick boy. Some supplies were furnished a tubercular mother in order that she might take the necessary precautions while she was at home. Antiseptic tablets were supplied to four children. A physician was sent to a family where three children were ill.

5. Four School Improvement Associations have been organized. We hope that there will be more associations organized during the fall.

6. The chief difficulty which I met this year in my work was in keeping the boys in school after March 1st. This difficulty was, to a great extent, the result of the action of a member of our School Board who is a practicing attorney. He did not think that the law should be enforced on account of the present conditions in our country. The majority of the School Board decided that the law must be enforced, but provided that pupils 15 or 16 years of age, who were imperatively needed to work on the farm, might be excused after April 1st by a special permit signed by the Superintendent of Schools. Regardless of the action of the School

Board, the member above mentioned advised many parents to keep their children at home when needed. He was also one of the attorneys for the defendants in the two cases which were appealed to the Circuit Court. About 97 pupils, 66% of whom were colored, withdrew before they made the required attendance.

With the exception of the pupils excused by a permit, we succeeded in getting all these pupils back except three.

7. There are so many features in the attendance work, that it is difficult to decide upon a special feature. I feel, however, that the work this year has been largely of a social nature.

We have tried to make it a special point to explain to parents and pupils the school law and its advantages. We hope that the parents who feel that they are obeying a law against their will, will soon realize the advantages of the law and will obey it voluntarily.

8. The School Attendance Law would be more favorably endorsed by the people of Kent County if school attendance were made compulsory until a child is 15 years of age rather than until he is up to 17 years of age.

9. The number of days in the field doing attendance work was 41.

10. The number of days doing office work was 104.

11. Number of visits to families, 129. Number of persons interviewed by officer, 180. Number of persons interviewed by Superintendent, 300.

RUBY K. AHERN,
Attendance Officer, Kent County.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY.

1. My records do not include the statistics asked for. Very few children in Montgomery County reach ten years of age without having been in school at all, but more are allowed to stop going when they do not like it, and many go so irregularly that they learn practically nothing of the course of study. The parents of those reported as not enrolled were sent a printed notice, and further attention was given a number of cases. Almost all were enrolled, but regular attendance was not always secured. The following wording was used in the notice.

"I am sending you on this sheet a form to return after the teacher has signed it, in order that I may know that I need not visit you.

"Should there be what you are sure is a sufficient reason for the non-enrollment, you may tell me what it is, using the other side of this sheet, and I will investigate it. You should answer by return mail."

	12 yrs.	13 yrs.	14 yrs.	15 yrs.	16 yrs.	17 yrs.
2. Attending 100 days.....	340	306	266	163	116	124
Less than 100 days.....	250	174	187	182	130	33

3. There have been five formal cases in the police court after arrests. Taken together they prove conclusively that the school attendance law will be enforced by whatever legal proceedings are necessary. No fines have been collected, and a sentence to jail of a parent unable to pay a fine of twenty dollars which had been imposed was suspended.

There have been a good many consultations over cases between the police justice and the attendance officer, which have prevented trials. There would have

been many more court cases if the notice reproduced below had not been mailed when moral suasion had been used as long as it seemed wise.

Rockville, Md.

The Attendance Officer of Montgomery County has reported to me that you are required by law to send

James Roe

to School and are not doing so.

Unless you can explain this fact in a way that is satisfactory, you will be summoned to appear before the Police Justice at Rockville, Md.

Very truly yours,

J. ALBY HENDERSON,

Police Justice.

4. A few cases of poor health have been reported to the Social Service League nurse. A number of children have been supplied with clothes which have been given with an encouraging interest. The donations have included some money for new shoes.

5. The school children have been asked to explain the requirements of the attendance law to their parents. A short summary of it was published in all the county papers just before the schools opened. White parents have been given talks at six meetings, and colored parents at nine. The appended letter has been sent to a great many parents, and personal letters written to a number. The visits to homes have been the chief means used to educate parents; and I have never left a house until I felt that I had accomplished something by going, but the problems presented in many cases have been very complex.

Honor Certificate of Attendance.



This Certifies, that Arthur Wallace
has completed the school year ending 6/8/1917 as prescribed by the

Board of Education of Montgomery County, Maryland,

by attending every school day, and is entitled to this distinction.

This Certificate is registered at the office of the Board of Education.

Five years perfect attendance

Approved:

May Woodward
Attendance Officer.

Issued June 8th, 1917

OFFICE OF
THE COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
MONTGOMERY COUNTY
ROCKVILLE, MD.

MARY MAGRUDER,
ATTENDANCE OFFICER

The School report shows the absence from
school, without lawful excuse of

John Doe

9 days

Pineland School

Jan. 19, 1917 report

If there is a good reason for this,
please let me know at once. Use the other
side of this sheet for your answer.

Yours Sincerely,

MARY MAGRUDER

ATTENDANCE OFFICER

6. The chief difficulties have been an unusual number of epidemics of contagious diseases; exceptionally inclement weather; phenomenally bad roads; and the increased cost of food, which left the poor people less for clothes and gave them a stronger feeling than they formerly had that they could not get on without help from their children. These can be summed up as a combination of circumstances which, by increasing the amount of irregular attendance which was unavoidable, made discrimination between sufficient reasons and plausible excuses more difficult and time-consuming than could have been foreseen.

This was counteracted in a measure by talks to the children in almost every school about the importance of attending every day, if possible. A certificate of attendance was promised those who were not absent at all, and one hundred and nine pupils received these. A duplicate of the most interesting one of them is appended.

7. My special aim, this year, has been to make as many people as possible think of the Compulsory Education Law as a right and reasonable one; to make as many parents as possible willing to act in accord with its requirements, and to make as many children as possible desire to be regular in school attendance.

I paid first visits to 101 schools and 72 subsequent visits where special conditions required them. I talked to children in school rooms 168 times, urging them to attend school every day they possibly could. I had private talks with a number of children with whom their teachers had had trouble. I gave a few talks about trees and a few about Indians to schools where mental activity needed to be developed, and the teachers wished such a talk in addition to the one about attendance. The children enjoyed the pictures shown them very much, and more of this work would have served a practical purpose in securing better attendance; but it was crowded out by the routine duties, except when time was available that could be used in no other way; but this was seldom the case.

I have had to contend with a strong prejudice against everything progressive in school work, and an intense indignation against the idea that parents have not an inalienable right to bring up their children in whatever way they choose; but only two parents have talked to me in an insulting way.

8. I hesitate about making any criticism of the law which is, on the whole, admirable, without having had more than a year's experience in enforcing it. My strong conviction now is that there are in Montgomery County, especially among very poor people, both colored and white, a number of mentally backward children between 15 and 17 who would obtain more education from continuing at work than from a hundred days in school. Their unwilling presence in classes of younger children seems to me undesirable for many reasons. I therefore believe that some special attention to this particular part of the attendance law is needed. Although the number of those to whom it can not be applied to advantage will decrease after more regular attendance for younger children has been secured, I do not think the type can be eliminated except by better conditions during a long period.

9. About 65 full days were spent in field work.

10. About 140 full days were spent in office work.

11. I have visited 126 homes belonging to 41 schools.

I have talked about attendance problems to several times as many people outside of the home visited as in them. Some schools did not need case work and my expense allowance was not sufficient for as much of this work as seemed desirable; but I did some in each of the thirteen election districts.

I spent every Saturday in the office, and the teachers talked over many cases with me with which I did not come into personal contact. They wrote to me about others I never saw. I had private talks at the school houses with a number of children with whom their teachers had had trouble. When people have asked me questions about my work, I have tried to make them feel the urgent need for more regular school attendance, instead of giving a superficial answer to questions prompted by curiosity.

MARY MAGRUDER,
Attendance Officer Montgomery County.

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY.

	10 yrs.	11 yrs.	12 yrs.	13 yrs.	14 yrs.	15 yrs.	16 yrs.
1. White	23	16	10	23	28	20	18
Colored	14	6	9	8	10	9	3
Total	37	22	19	31	38	29	21
		12 yrs.	13 yrs.	14 yrs.	15 yrs.	16 yrs.	17 yrs.
2. Attending 100 days							
(White)	466	403	320	242	99	41	
(Colored)	130	121	87	42	14	4	
Total	596	524	407	284	113	45	
Less than 100 days							
(White)	39	32	40	20	12	6	
(Colored)	46	48	39	34	8	0	
Total	85	80	79	54	20	6	

3. No arrests, no convictions, no trials, hence no fines nor costs collected or suspended.

4. Relief conditions have been brought about through co-operation with teachers, in some communities through the local school associations and teachers' and parents associations, but generally through the Social Service Association of Prince George's County, which has investigated and in almost every case made satisfactory arrangements.

5. First by a house-to-house canvass by the teacher in each district; then by notices of copy of the law mailed out same day absence was reported, and, where necessary, followed by personal interview with parent or guardian or children, he going more fully into the matter and explaining the advantages to be derived by conforming to the law.

6. Chiefly the necessity of parents having to keep pupils at home to do laboring work owing to the scarcity of and difficulty experienced in obtaining hired help to do this work.

7. We required of every teacher the prompt sending in of the monthly compulsory education attendance report blanks. We also instructed them to report to this office during the month any urgent cases which demanded immediate action. As soon as the regular report blanks were received a notice to the parent or guardian of the person violating the law was mailed, which generally resulted in the return to school of the person reported. In addition to sending in the monthly reports, each teacher was furnished printed cards to notify this office within five days after the sending in of their previous monthly report, giving the names of the children who had returned to school reported that month. These returning children were then checked against the report of that particular teacher, and all those who had not then returned were given special attention, which consisted of a personal interview with the teacher of the school to obtain a more thorough and detailed report of the circumstances of the case or cases; from there the Attendance Officer went direct to the home, or homes, and personally interviewed the parent or guardian, sometimes in the presence of the child reported, which resulted in the return to school of the child reported in every case, except where it was found that a legal excuse permitted such absence.

8. We do not think there are any suggestions we could make, as the present law is, in our minds, sufficient for the needs and purposes intended.

9. Approximately 129 days were spent in the field.

10. Approximately 82 days were spent in the office. From June 15 to date time has been spent either in office or special outside work.

11. One hundred and fifty white families; 28 colored families; interviewed about 205 white and 47 colored persons.

EDGAR S. McCENEY,

Attendance Officer, Prince George's County.

QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY.

1. The approximate number of children beginning with ten years who were brought into school this year for the first time is 100. Their ages range from ten years to sixteen years. The enrollment for the first term of school was increased by 285 children.

WHITE.

	12 yrs.	13 yrs.	14 yrs.	15 yrs.	16 yrs.	17 yrs.
2. Attending 100 days.....	206	204	162	130	80	61
Less than 100 days.....	18	24	21	23	22	9

COLORED.

Attending 100 days.....	54	46	26	14	6	0
Less than 100 days.....	18	39	27	23	19	9

3. No arrests were made.

4. Relief work: A church society donated two pairs of shoes to one family.

5. Methods used to educate parents to the need of regular school attendance. I spoke at about 200 Patrons' Meetings on Compulsory School Attendance and my work as Attendance Officer. These meetings were held in the various school houses.

6. (a) My chief difficulty was among the oyster settlements, where children had licenses to oyster. (b) Children who had not completed the Seventh Grade but had been out of school for one, two and three years.

7. Reports of all absentees were sent to the office monthly by the teachers and urgent cases were reported on the third day of absence by 'phone or letter. Truants were reported by 'phone. Letters calling attention to the law were sent to the parents or the homes visited; in many cases both letter and visit were necessary. I visited schools every day it was possible for me to be in the field, even though the attendance was good. My visit to the school seemed to impress the children that it was very necessary for them to attend school regularly. On file in card form is a record of each day's work; also a monthly report for each month's work. Twenty-eight permits were given to boys to assist with farm work the last month of school.

8. Amendment suggested: Prevent children of school age who have not completed the Seventh Grade from securing an oyster license; and a provision for the children who have been out of school for a year or more.

9. Number of days in the field doing attendance work, 90.

10. Number of days of office work, 122.

11. Number of visits to families, 168; number of persons interviewed, 479; number of visits to schools, 363.

LELIA A. THOMAS,

Attendance Officer, Queen Anne's County.

ST. MARY'S COUNTY.

1. After a careful examination of all available data I find it quite impracticable to estimate with any accuracy the number of children brought into school for the first time under the Compulsory School Attendance Law. A comparison of the enrollment for the year just ended with that of the preceding year, viz: the scholastic year ended July, 1916, shows practically no increase in the enrollment of the white schools. The colored schools show an increase in enrollment of 258 as compared with the preceding year. The increase in the average attendance over that of the preceding year is about 8.5 per cent. for both white and colored schools.

2. The following table answers your second query as nearly as it is possible to make it:

	WHITE.					
	12 yrs.	13 yrs.	14 yrs.	15 yrs.	16 yrs.	17 yrs.
Attending 100 days or more.....	238	132	147	61	40	0
Less than 100 days.....	34	40	46	43	9	0
	COLORED.					
	12 yrs.	13 yrs.	14 yrs.	15 yrs.	16 yrs.	17 yrs.
Attending 100 days or more.....	108	76	49	55	12	0
Less than 100 days.....	105	96	101	83	48	0

3. No arrests have been made during the year. Our policy has been educative—making patrons acquainted with the provisions and spirit of the law.

4. Only one case of poverty has come to our notice. Owing to the unwillingness of the mother in this case to have any publicity as to the condition of the family we were unable to do anything in the matter. Conditions in this family were not so bad, and, from what I could learn, only temporary.

5. The Attendance Officer let no opportunity pass to make patrons familiar with the law and its operations. Every opportunity was availed of to educate the people of the advantages of regular school attendance and to urge an acquiescence in the law, both in spirit and in letter.

6. We have met with some criticisms of the law as infringing upon the prerogative of the parent. The main difficulty, however, has been the farm labor problem, especially during the busy farming season in the spring. It is the consensus of opinion that at no time has the procuring of farm labor presented greater difficulty than during the current year. Boys, especially during the spring season, were kept out of school to work upon the farm—when parents desired to keep them in school, and under normal conditions would have kept them at school—because labor for farm work could not be procured at any price. So strong were the feelings and sympathies of the people generally that the farmers had to have the help of their children, that we felt it would be unwise to take any drastic steps in the matter.

An epidemic of measles and whooping cough, which started in late winter, spread over many sections of the county and materially interfered with school attendance. The very bad weather during the winter, and bad roads, at times rendering travel quite impracticable, were factors in curtailing the average attendance.

7. Answered by line of work indicated in Nos. 3 and 5 of this report.

8. I have no suggestions to offer. I believe the law as it stands is all right, and, under normal conditions, would, I am confident, be generally accepted.

9. I was out in field work about 125 days.
10. During the year about 40 days in office work.
11. I visited fifty-three families in their homes, and interviewed between three and four hundred persons in the interest of better school attendance.

ZACH T. RALEY,

Attendance Officer, St. Mary's County.

SOMERSET COUNTY.

As it seems to have been the plan of the State Board to give the new law as much experimental force as possible, I have endeavored to follow out that plan, as my report to my local Board will indicate. Though I feel that I have not accomplished all that I desired, yet, in many respects, good results seem to have followed. In my report you will notice that those who have attended 100 and those who have attended less than 100 days applies only to the white schools. The colored schools were crowded; in many cases they were overcrowded to such an extent that compulsory force could not be applied.

1. The following number of white pupils, ranging from the ages of ten to sixteen years, respectively, were brought into school for the first time:

	10 yrs.	11 yrs.	12 yrs.	13 yrs.	14 yrs.	15 yrs.	16 yrs.
	19	9	11	1	1	1	2
	12 yrs.	13 yrs.	14 yrs.	15 yrs.	16 yrs.	17 yrs.	
2. Attending 100 days.....	348	254	221	133	77	29	
Less than 100 days.....	86	60	68	58	46	12	

3. Five warrants were issued, two arrests made, one brought to trial, one convicted. The amount of fine in the convicted case not named, as the payment of such was suspended until further notice of noncompliance with the law was made.

4. Nothing has been done in regard to permanent relief, except in a few minor cases. I have asked that the law in regard to Widows' Pensions be complied with, but without result. I have solicited the help of our local Health Physician, with good results. Have clothed, with outside help, one family of nine children, whose parents were unable to furnish them, and thus secured the attendance of those children of school age. Three children were found homes where suitable clothing and food could be furnished them, as well as school facilities. Two little orphan boys were committed to the Orphans' Home in Baltimore.

5. Various arguments, to suit different people, have been used to educate parents to the need of regular school attendance. I have emphasized the matter before teachers at their schools, at public meetings, and by visiting parents at their homes. I have also advocated, with some success, the organization of parent-teachers' clubs.

6. The chief difficulties which I have met in work this year have been: In some cases, utter disregard of the law or failure to believe that the law as it stood would be enforced, and the indifference of parents to the fact that their home duties were more important than that of the public schools; the need of suitable clothing for children whose parents are unable to furnish them; the lack of sympathy from our local officers because of supposed defects in the law; and last, but not least, my chief difficulty has been to reach boys who are out of school from choice, because of the lack of a juvenile court in this county.

7. To understand more clearly the work that I have accomplished, or any feature of it, I refer you to my year's report made to my local Board, and sent you under separate cover. (Note: For lack of space this special report is omitted.)

8. I prefer to make no statement in regard to the amendment of the School Attendance Law. Labor conditions are such in this county, especially in the rural districts, that if the law is rigidly enforced with boys who can render help on the farms, it will incense rather than make the people look favorably upon it, especially during the war periods.

9. I have been in the field doing attendance work on an average of three hours per day.

10. The clerical or office work was performed when my attendance work was completed for the day. I did some office work every day during the year for eight months.

11. I have visited 184 homes, white and colored; have interviewed personally about 400 persons; have written 200 form letters and almost as many personal ones. I have visited 78 white and 11 colored schools, giving in each department a short talk on compulsory education to the pupils.

12. I have found one pupil was expelled during the year, 20 pupils had to remain home part of the time on account of extreme poverty, 47 pupils entered late, 6 truants, 35 moved to the city or other counties, and 48 withdrawals to enter school in adjoining counties.

13. The number of pupils receiving private instruction from certificated teachers are as follows:

In Princess Anne, 20; average attendance for the year, 16.

Deals Island, 20; average attendance for the year, 17.

Number receiving home instruction, satisfactory to Attendance Officer and Superintendent, 11.

Number having a long illness, 16.

This data shows some of the reasons why the enrollment as well as the average attendance was cut down during the year.

14. Thirteen schools were closed during the year by our local Board of Health on account of epidemics of measles, scarlet fever and typhoid fever.

ADDIE E. BOND,

Attendance Officer, Somerset County.

TALBOT COUNTY.

1. We have no reports showing the approximate number of children of each age who were brought into school for the first time. In fact, we are inclined to feel that there were not very many of these children above the age of ten years.

2. It is impossible for us to make an accurate statement as to the number of children who have made less than 100 days attendance, for the reason that we have failed to keep a record of transfers, and sometimes a child may have made a total of more than 100 days in two different schools; but in each one of these schools he may have been present less than 100 days, so that by taking his name from our term reports we may have counted him twice as a pupil who had made less than the 100 days. With this element of error, we get the following figures:

WHITE.

	12 yrs.	13 yrs.	14 yrs.	15 yrs.	16 yrs.	17 yrs.
Attending 100 days.....	155	150	115	65	67	28
Attending less than 100 days....	69	55	56	41	33	17

COLORED.

	12 yrs.	13 yrs.	14 yrs.	15 yrs.	16 yrs.	17 yrs.
Attending 100 days.....	71	45	40	37	23	3
Attending less than 100 days....	44	30	22	20	17	2

3. Number of arrests made during the year..... 6
- Number brought to trial..... 6
- Number convicted 6

In each of the above cases sentence was suspended by the Police Magistrate upon the promise of the parent to comply with the Attendance Law.

Approximate total of fines suspended..... \$30.00

Approximate total of costs suspended..... 14.70

4. In the instance where children were out of school for want of proper clothing, clothes were supplied through the Children's Aid Society working in co-operation for the enforcement of the Attendance Law. In cases where children were out of school because of physical inability to attend and to perform the work of study, we required a certificate from a physician. This often led to examination and treatment of eyes, throat, teeth and other bodily defects. It also lead to the discovery of cases of tuberculosis in whole families, which were dealt with by the Children's Aid Society according to their needs. In every case where the family was unable to employ medical aid, such services was provided through the agency of the society mentioned.

5. We endeavored, through repeated visits and interviews, to impress upon parents the importance of their children receiving an education in order that they might not only have a chance to compete with others, but also that they might enjoy life more fully, and to impress them with the idea that to receive such education, they must have their children attend regularly. We stressed this point of view rather than the idea that there was a law to be enforced and obeyed. Whenever we touched upon this feature, we tried to make the parent understand that the child could work off his school attendance to advantage while young, thereby permitting him to enter upon employment sooner than he might if he failed to attend regularly. We had no public meetings where this matter was discussed for it seemed to us an individual question; but the county newspapers were good enough to frequently publish items and reports concerning the enforcement of the law. As a result, we feel that in Talbot County there is no opposition to the law that is of any great moment. In fact, practically all the fair-thinking people endorse it without reserve.

6. The chief difficulties we have encountered in enforcing the law here are:

First—Those due to extreme ignorance on the part of a few parents.

Second—Those due to the desire of some landowners to have their children perform the lighter tasks of farm work rather than have them go to school. This difficulty is, without doubt, accentuated by the scarcity of labor, and in a few instances of special need, permits of absence were granted.

Third—Those due to the feeling of long ago that children are chattels, and belong to the parents, and that the parents have a right to do as they please with them.

7. The Attendance Officer visited every canning-house in the county, while in operation, with the result that she found a number of children under the age of 12 working there without labor permits. Many of these were from Baltimore City.

8. The following letter kindly furnished me by M. Tilghman Johnson, Police Magistrate for Talbot County, before whom all the trials were heard, states an important feature of the law which seems to need amendment:

July 26, 1917.

*Miss Emma L. Davies,
Easton, Maryland.*

DEAR MISS DAVIES:—

I beg to suggest the following changes in the School Attendance Law:

First. Section 162, 2nd paragraph. "Every child residing in any county of the State being 13 years of age, or 14 years of age, shall attend some public school for not less than 100 days during the period of each year that the public schools of the county are in session. Such attendance shall begin not later than November 1st in each year and must thereafter be consecutive so as to complete said 100 days' attendance by the first day of April following. And failure to attend school consecutively, as herein provided, shall be a misdemeanor as hereinafter provided, unless satisfactory excuses for such failure shall be given to and accepted by the County Superintendent of Schools in each county. Every child shall attend some public school the entire period of each year, etc."

NOTE.—I would suggest no change or alteration for the rest of Section 162, paragraph 2, and what I have suggested above I would suggest also to be inserted in paragraph 3, Section 162.

Second. Paragraph 4, Section 162, providing a penalty under this law is not clear. I think it would be well to make a flat fine of \$10.00, and to cut out the words "for each offence." It is difficult to know just what the words "for each offence" mean, and I think a flat fine of \$10.00 would, if imposed in one or two cases, soon lead parents or guardians to respect the law and to be careful with references to attendance.

Third. To Section 157, I think some penalty should be attached so as to punish parents or guardians who consent to or assist in truancy. I would suggest the following Section: "And if said School Commissioners shall believe, on the evidence submitted, that any child is or was truant from school with the consent or approval of its parent or guardian, then it shall be the duty of said Commissioners to swear out a warrant for the arrest and said parent or guardian who, on conviction before any Justice of the Peace or Court having competent jurisdiction, shall be fined not more than \$5.00 for each offence."

Very truly yours,

(Signed) M. T. JOHNSON.

9. Number of days spent in field doing attendance work, 148.

10. Remaining days were spent in the office.

11. Number of visits to families and persons interviewed on account of absent children, 293.

EMMA L. DAVIES,
Attendance Officer, Talbot County.

WASHINGTON COUNTY.

1. Eight hundred and fifty-five children ten years of age or older were brought into school by the Compulsory Attendance Law.

	12 yrs.	13 yrs.	14 yrs.	15 yrs.	16 yrs.	17 yrs.
2. Attending 100 days.....	172	98	74	98	30	20
Less than 100 days.....	343	196	147	196	59	39

3. Two arrests; two brought to trial; none convicted.

4. Years of experience as a social worker in our city and county with the Orphans' Home, the King's Daughters, church societies and with the district nurse enabled me to do good work along this line.

5. Frequent visits to the home. Persuasion and heart-to-heart talks were the methods most commonly used to educate parents to the need of regular school attendance.

6. Indifference of parents, epidemics of chicken-pox, whooping cough, and measles prevailed in our county to an alarming extent; five and six hundred pupils being out at times. Several schools were ordered closed on account of diphtheria.

7. Co-operation of the agent of the Child Labor Bureau. Special interest and work in establishing a night school for boys and girls employed in stores, factories, etc.

8. I believe in the appointment of a Juvenile Court Judge and summons served instead of warrants; also, schools established for delinquents.

9. One hundred and sixty full days in the field.

10. Forty-six full days in the office.

11. Six hundred and forty-seven visits to families. One thousand and ninety-eight persons interviewed, not including many night visits.

JACOB A. ZIEGLER,

Attendance Officer, Washington County.

WICOMICO COUNTY.

WHITE.

	10 yrs.	11 yrs.	12 yrs.	13 yrs.	14 yrs.	15 yrs.	17 yrs.
1.	22	9	8	5	6	1	1

Total number in school for first time this year, 52.

COLORED.

	10 yrs.	11 yrs.	12 yrs.	13 yrs.	14 yrs.	15 yrs.	16 yrs.
	45	27	19	23	5	4	2

Total number in school for first time this year, 125.

Total number white and colored, 177.

The above figures were taken from term reports, and the children of the above ages were in the first grade. It is not probable that children 10 years of age in the first grade have formerly attended school.

2. This question is answered as accurately as possible, and the result, however, is only the approximate figures for white children:

	12 yrs.	13 yrs.	14 yrs.	15 yrs.	16 yrs.	17 yrs.
Attending 100 days.....	250	200	100	50	20	15
Less than 100 days.....	15	9	4	4	5	3

3. Two arrests were made during the year, and both times the parties were brought to trial. In the first case, the party was fined \$5.00 and costs, making his bill \$9.45. In the second case, the party was not fined. The law was explained to him clearly by the State's Attorney in the presence of the teacher and Attendance Officer, after the case was dismissed from the magistrate's office.

4. Along the line of relief, the social worker, Mrs. Lippincott, has done much, both in the improving of home conditions and in meeting the temporary needs such as food and clothing. In some cases, if a child were suffering from disease she had the child removed to a sanatorium, thus relieving the families so that the other children could attend school.

5. The Community Leagues have done much toward arousing the parents' interest in the schools, and thereby school attendance, in many cases, has been aided. School socials and entertainments, and corn clubs have also aided.

6. My chief difficulty has been the fact that parents consider compulsory education an encroachment upon their prerogatives. Many of them think their children are personal property to be treated as they (the parents) wish, regardless of the children's welfare. Parents usually think better of the law after it is explained. In some cases they are obstinate and will not listen to any argument; but these cases are rare. Another difficulty has been that I could not get over as much territory as I would have liked owing to the slow conveyance of horse and buggy.

7. Much has been accomplished by indirection—not that I have failed to go into homes, for people must feel that you are interested in them and are trying to help them if you want to gain their confidence; but many times a family will send their children to school, having heard that the attendance officer visited in the neighborhood, and is enforcing the law. In some cases, where a boy is not making good in school because of truancy or lack of parental control, which is too often the trouble, his parents have been persuaded to give the boy a chance in a different environment, or send him to a different school, like the Junior Republic or Loch Raven, where he will be subject to discipline. One boy has been sent to Rosewood and three to Loch Raven, this school year. One of the three was out of Loch Raven only on parole.

8. At the present time I am not able to say how the present school attendance law may be amended to make it better serve the cause of Education. I do *not* think the standard should be lowered, either in age or required work. Cases have arisen during the year when it would have been advisable for the Attendance Law and Child Labor Law to have been interpreted the same for the age of sixteen.

9. I have been in the field doing attendance work about forty full days; that is, in the county and not counting the days spent in visiting schools and homes right in Salisbury. In all, about ninety full days in the field.

10. It is difficult to state the number of full days of office work done; but I judge about eighty-five, not counting days at Institute and meetings of attendance officers.

11. My visits to homes number 116. My visits to mills and factories, 5. My visits to schools, 98. Total visits, 219.

Many persons have been interviewed on account of absent children of whom I did not take note.

E. VAUGHAN JACOBS,
Attendance Officer, Wicomico County.

WORCESTER COUNTY.

1. The approximate number of children of each age, beginning with ten years, who were brought into school this year for the first time:

10 yrs.	11 yrs.	12 yrs.	13 yrs.	14 yrs.	15 yrs.	16 yrs.	17 yrs.
15	29	45	38	48	15	19	7

2. Children in the county of each age beginning with twelve years who have made 100 days or more:

12 yrs.	13 yrs.	14 yrs.	15 yrs.	16 yrs.	17 yrs.
343	273	227	157	130	54

Children of each age beginning with twelve who were enrolled but made less than 100 days:

12 yrs.	13 yrs.	14 yrs.	15 yrs.	16 yrs.	17 yrs.
9	49	39	42	14	24

3. I arrested only two men—both of whom were brought to trial and fined \$1.00 and costs. The costs in each case amounted to about \$3.00. The first man arrested had warrants for three children against him. Only one warrant was executed. The other three were held over him for his good behavior, and it was very effective.

Second man at first refused to pay his fine—said he did not have the money; but when he found that he would have to go to jail unless fine was paid, he produced the necessary amount.

4. In one extreme case of poverty there were seven children—four of the school ages—who did not have the proper clothing. The father had been badly burned; thus his earning power was reduced. With the aid of friends I was able to clothe the children so they could attend school. The family was appreciative, and children attended school thereafter regularly except in cases of sickness and bad roads.

There were other cases of poverty, but when the children did not attend regularly it was due to long distances to walk over bad roads.

I sent one boy, who was a waif, to the Junior Republic at Annapolis Junction. He resented it at first, but during a two weeks' vacation which he came to Snow Hill to spend, he thanked me for sending him there. I believe it will make a man of him.

I had some cases where children attended regularly but were so poorly clad that I appealed to the Empty Stocking Club of Snow Hill, and they responded promptly and took care of the children.

At one time I found three children who were deserted by their mother during the father's absence. (The father worked away from home, spending his week-ends only with his family.) It looked at first like a case for the Henry Watson Aid of Baltimore, but I found some relatives of the children who were willing to take them and send them to school regularly.

5. At first a letter was sent out by our Superintendent, printed on front cover of copy of Compulsory Attendance Law.

Talks to parents were arranged in all the school districts, in form of patrons' meetings, and an effort was made to organize parents and teachers clubs. These attempts met with success in some districts, but in many cases all parents did not see the importance of such organizations.

I feel, however, that those who did attend these meetings have been aroused sufficiently to interest others, and it is my opinion that during the next scholastic year these meetings will be well attended.

6. Lack of appreciation of an education has been a great drawback to me in my work. Worcester County covers a large area of farm lands, and when the child's education interfered with the tilling of the soil or harvesting the crops, the farmer thought the education should be sacrificed. Such parents look upon the child only in terms of dollars and cents, not realizing that his earning power would be increased by education.

The attendance was very much affected by bad roads and sickness, especially among the younger children. There were so many freezes and thaws during the past winter that the roads for nearly three months were almost impassable in many parts of the county.

As to sickness, three schools were closed several weeks on account of scarlet fever during January, February and a part of March; and measles almost broke up the primary grades of several schools. In fact, such an epidemic of measles was never known in Worcester County. The spread of this disease was due to carelessness on the part of parents.

7. As the reports of delinquent pupils would come in from the teachers, every report was carefully examined and a list made of the cases requiring my attention. If the reason were illegal, and term of absence short—provided it was the first offense—I would write a letter to the parent calling his attention to this matter and enclose a copy of the Compulsory Attendance Law, marking that portion of the law bearing upon that particular case. The second offense was followed up by a visit, and in most cases the visit brought the desired results. In some cases the letter was sufficient. A copy of all letters sent out to parents was kept on file in the office. I found that very wise, having to refer to these letters in case of a dispute.

I found some children illegally employed in factories and mills, but had no trouble about them. As soon as I explained the Compulsory Attendance and Child Labor Laws to the parents and employers the children were no longer employed thus and went to school.

I visited all the schools in the county and tried to get close to the teachers and the children, and I found that a great help in my work. It was my aim and desire to win the friendship and respect of the teachers and children. The co-operation of the teachers greatly aided me in my work.

As the Board of Education of Worcester County very kindly purchased a Ford for my use, I was able to accomplish more in the way of visiting schools and families than I otherwise would have done. The neighborhoods needing my special attention were a long distance from Snow Hill.

8. If any change is made in this law, it seems to me that it would better serve the cause of education should it be left to the discretion of the Superintendent, Board of Education or Attendance Officer as to whether a child should be excused.

Also in cases of boys and girls of fourteen, fifteen and sixteen years of age who have not been in school at all, or for two or three years, to provide a night school for them, authorizing the Boards of Education to appoint and pay a teacher in the several districts of the counties where needed to run the night school. Books to be supplied from the Free Book Fund.

9. About half of every month was spent visiting schools, factories and homes. On two occasions I did substitute work in schools—one day each.

10. About half of every month was devoted to office work.

11. Number of families visited and persons interviewed: My records show that I visited seventy-five families during the scholastic year 1916-1917.

As to the number of persons interviewed, nearly every week parents would call to see me at the office of the County Board of Education or at my home. There was an average of about five parents weekly who interviewed me during the year. Some would want the law explained, and many of them would want to keep a child at home, and would come to find out whether the excuse for same was a legal one.

MARY A. TOWNSEND,
Attendance Officer, Worcester County.

FIVE YEARS OF COMPULSORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IN BALTIMORE COUNTY

By JOHN T. HERSHNER

Chief Attendance Officer, Baltimore County.

The first Compulsory School Attendance Law for the Counties of Maryland, enacted by the General Assembly of 1912, was optional. It gave discretionary powers to the County Boards of Education in regard to the enforcement of the law. Four years later a mandatory law was passed by the Legislature, which became effective on June 1, 1916.

The Board of Education of Baltimore County, at its meeting in October, 1912, gave careful consideration to the evil effects of non-attendance, and especially irregularity of pupils, upon class-room instruction. They decided to organize the Department of School Attendance, and began work at once.

The plan of organization consisted in the election of Assistant Superintendent John T. Hershner as Chief Attendance Officer, with Superintendent Albert S. Cook and Clarence G. Cooper, Assistant Superintendent in charge of Rural Schools, as assistants. It provided further that principals of schools having three assistants or less, and one assistant teacher in each of the larger schools, might act as Assistant Attendance Officers when called upon by the Chief or his two assistants. None of the officers was to receive additional pay for the performance of this duty.

After two years' experience it seemed necessary that the Chief Attendance Officer should give the greater part of his time to the work. This was important in order to avoid too much diversion of effort by the Superintendents, and to centralize the study of causes that lead to non-attendance.

In September, 1916, Miss Ruth Jones was appointed an Assistant Attendance Officer, and was assigned to the special field of work comprising Highlandtown and Canton.

The magnitude of the compulsory attendance work, and the difficulties of law enforcement in a county system, may be indicated by a brief review of the physical conditions in Baltimore County. There are in Baltimore County 180 public schools, scattered over 622 square miles of territory. They vary in size from the one-room rural school to the large city type. They enroll more than 23,000 pupils, and the parochial schools contain several thousand additional students.

The home activities of children are also varied; many of them live upon farms, while others reside in suburban communities and industrial sections. Many children are compelled to walk long distances to school, and oftentimes over bad roads. Health facilities for speedy inspection of school children are lacking, and social institutions to care for the unfit are poorly organized.

It should be plainly seen that the few attendance officers provided by law for the county cannot receive daily reports from principals or make daily visits of inspection to schools and visit the homes of parents to learn the cause of absence.

The principal is, therefore, a very important factor in the successful administration of the law. Its success or failure will depend to a very large extent upon the tact, courage and perseverance of the teachers. Parents, naturally, resent any interference in matters of child control that have heretofore had no special reference to them. There is a common impression that compulsory school attendance has its application only to truancy. This is an erroneous belief. To the experienced investigator irregular attendance constitutes a more serious evil because of the large numbers of children involved. The function of the principal, then, is to work diligently toward the reduction of absenteeism, and to report the most troublesome cases to the attendance officer for his study and solution.

The plan to have an assistant teacher act as an attendance officer was tried successfully in several of the largest schools. The teacher who seemed best qualified for the social work was required to visit parents occasionally for half-day periods, and a substitute teacher was provided for the class. This had two values, at least; first, the visiting teacher secured much useful information which helped the principal in making reports to the attendance department, thereby saving much valuable time to the investigator; secondly, the social significance was important. The teacher had learned many of the causes that operated unfavorably upon children, producing truancy, delinquency and crime. Without this information it is doubtful if the teachers could have taught this class of children quite so efficiently and sympathetically.

The economic and social importance of compulsory education is worthy of mention.

Statistical investigations show a great waste of public revenues owing to the non-attendance and irregularity of pupils. Necessary accommodations and equipment must be provided for the number of enrolled pupils, and teachers must be paid. When children are present one day and absent the next, the teachers must duplicate much of the instruction. This means great loss of time and effort to both pupils and teachers. A business concern could not operate a plant successfully on a basis of 75 per cent. of efficiency, and yet the State of Maryland has been running its schools with smaller returns. For the five-year period prior to the enactment of the compulsory law, the white public schools of Baltimore County averaged only 75.9 per cent. of the average enrollment. For the five-year period of compulsion, ending June, 1917, the average attendance was 80.6 per cent. These modest gains show that practically 1,000 more pupils were in school each day during the period of five years the law was in operation than there were during an equal number of years prior to the law enforcement. Figured in terms of dollars and cents on the basis of the per capita cost of each child, it shows approximately that \$30,000 of public funds were wasted each year by the non-attendance of enrolled pupils.

The social worth of education is not easy to value. Probably it can best be indicated by its effects upon methods of living. With the elimination of ignorance and illiteracy, progress is made along economic lines; health and sanitation improve, and life in general shows a higher form of spiritualization. Under supervision, backed by the stimulus of the compulsory law, we have been pleased to observe much improvement along these lines in many homes of the county. The greatest value of the work, of course, lies in the training of a class of boys and girls for efficient and loyal service in a democracy, who would

otherwise remain ignorant and therefore dangerous to the best interests of society. While this has been our dominant thought, we have laid particular emphasis upon the education of the public mind, for it seemed to us that a sympathetic and enlightened public sentiment must, in the end, constitute the fundamental basis for any system of compulsory education that shall be worth while.

The methods of conducting the educational work varied somewhat according to the class of people to be reached. Patrons' clubs, civic associations and group meetings of teachers constituted media for the discussion of social and non-attendance problems. Private conferences and personal interviews were the chief means of approach in the adjustment of trouble. The logical method of approach in attempting to eliminate truancy and non-attendance is to educate the people to see the need for education and to remove the causes as far as possible. In the first place, the idea of compulsion seems repugnant to many people. That the State has any rights of co-relationship in the control of children is forcefully resented. One mother expressed her views rather significantly by saying, "I live in America and can do as I please." Her three boys had been kept from school during the fall and spring for work, and her excuse for their absence during the winter was that, "it was too cold and windy."

"Indifference of parents" constituted the chief excuse given by principals for non-attendance or irregularity of attendance of pupils. The word "indifference" is used here in a broad sense.

Miss Jones visited 1,000 families in Highlandtown and Canton during the school year ending June, 1917, and the Chief Attendance Officer visited an equal number in other parts of the county. Their investigations substantially confirm the reports made by the teachers. Experience convinces us that indifferent parents should be handled rather vigorously, because of the social evils that naturally follow.

During the five years of compulsory school attendance work 259 cases were presented before the magistrate courts; 200 were paroled on promise to comply with the law, 18 were committed to the Juvenile Court, 37 were fined and 4 were given short jail sentences for contempt of court.

No arrests were made during the first year the law was in operation. After having determined the reasons for non-attendance by careful investigation, we proceeded to enforce the law with more rigor during each of the successive four years. Action was taken against 22 of the recalcitrant parents during the second year, 53 the third, 76 the fourth and 122 the fifth.

In this work the co-operation of the magistrates has been most praiseworthy. Of the 122 cases, 14 failed to appear for various reasons. The remaining 108 persons were found guilty. It should be said to the credit of the magistrates that more fines would have been imposed except for the recommendation of the Attendance Officer.

"Illness of child" has been one of the excuses most abused. Indifferent mothers often use this expediency to keep their children from school for service. Frequently the children use the device to remain at home. Many of the poor people do not have physicians, and ills that might soon be cured by a physician are allowed to drag along indefinitely. The family of Mr. A. illustrates the point in mind. The children were reported on several occasions as being unlawfully absent on account of illness. An investigation was made and the mother interviewed. The following conditions were discovered: Three children of

school age were affected with some form of eczematous disease; one child's face was covered with sores; no physician had been consulted and only simple home remedies had been applied. The mother had required all the children, even the grown-up boys, to wash the dishes, in turns, because she thought the medical effect of water in which dishes had been washed was beneficial to their skin.

The seriousness of this case lies in two facts: the children had been kept from school for a large part of the year, and they had evidently been the source of infection in other homes, for the mother facetiously remarked that one of her daughters had visited relatives in an adjoining county and that the relatives were affected in the same way. The mother promised to call in a physician at the end of the week, but a visit to the family a month later revealed the fact that this had not been done. A warrant was issued for the arrest of the father. He eluded the officer on the occasion of the first visit and was arrested the following afternoon and spent the night in jail before a hearing could be had. The father secured the services of a physician at once and the children were returned to school within a few weeks.

Some will argue that this is an extreme case, but is typical to show the ignorance and indifference of many cases reported to the attendance department each year. The most serious handicap in handling such cases is the fact that they cannot be treated speedily and wisely without the assistance of a visiting nurse or a physician, for nothing short of prosecution will cause some parents to consult a physician. We have strong convictions that many of the epidemics that seriously affect school attendance and cause a great waste of money and valuable time to children might be prevented if the department had some such means of support.

Poverty is another important factor in the work. Much of it has been found to be due to improvident parents. One case which came to our notice in 1913 is typical to explain the problem: The father and mother were addicted to the use of intoxicants, but the mother represented the worst form of degradation. The son had been a truant for years, and the daughter was fast falling into the brother's habit. Both parents worked in the industries, leaving the children without care during the day. An investigation showed that the house was almost denuded of furnishings, not even a bed being found. The boy was thirteen years of age and the girl eleven. The boy stated that he had to pick up coal wherever it could be found to keep the fire going at night, for the parents slept in large chairs. Other conditions were pitiful and need not be mentioned. The Baltimore County Children's Aid Society was brought into the case and temporary relief given. The mother was given a chance to reform her habits, and if she exhibited no inclination to do so, was to expect prosecution. The children were returned to school promptly, but in the course of a few weeks the mother lapsed, and, accordingly, was brought into court and paroled under supervision. The significant feature is that the children were kept in school quite regularly for two years and the home conditions showed marked improvement. People of this class usually return to their old habits from time to time; but, by supervision and the stimulus of law, they have been forced to work more regularly and spend their earnings for necessities rather than waste them.

On the other hand, there have been numerous cases where the families were in need because of some stress of circumstances. The Federated Charities of Highlandtown have been of valuable service in caring for those in that section who were in need of relief. While the work of the Baltimore County Children's Aid Society is primarily to provide homes and care for dependent and neglected children, it has also made provision for the relief work that usually accompanies such cases. In order to assist this society in charitable work and to extend our educational ideals to the children of the school, the Junior Children's Aid Society was organized in 1916. Mrs. Albert S. Cook was elected chairman, and through her efforts, assisted by Miss Mary A. Lucas, who was secretary of the parent organization, 39 organizations, containing 3,580 members, have been enrolled during the two years. The membership is purely voluntary, and the annual dues are ten cents for each member. Splendid contributions of cast-off clothing and shoes, made by the children, have been of great service to the attendance department. If it had not been for this assistance many pupils could not have been kept in school without serious consequences to the children themselves.

The committee in charge of the promotion of social and educational work among the members of the society is composed of Mrs. Albert S. Cook, chairman; Mrs. Samuel M. Shoemaker, Dr. William Burdick, of the Public Athletic League; Miss Lida Lee Tall, assistant superintendent in charge of grammar grades, and John T. Hershner, Assistant Superintendent of Schools. The members *ex-officio* are Albert S. Cook, Superintendent of Schools, and George L. Jones, Secretary of the Henry Watson Children's Aid Society.

The teachers have given their hearty co-operation in this work, and also in the work of enforcing the Compulsory School Attendance Law.

The Junior members deserve special mention for their splendid contributions.

It is significant to note from the report of Miss Lucas that 228 children were given assistance by the Society; but probably the thing most worth while has been the social and educative influence upon its own members. Excellent opportunities have been found to motivate the study of civics and hygiene, and to stimulate the children's interest in proper standards of school attendance and conduct.

The importance of compulsory school attendance to the farmer's child should not be underestimated. Our records show the average attendance of rural pupils to be much lower than that of pupils of suburban schools. This is accounted for, in part, by bad roads, longer distances for children to travel to school, and the difficulty farmers are having in securing help. There is, too, a traditional feeling among some farmers that a few years of schooling will suffice to equip their boys for productive service.

It may be wisely argued that the boy on the farm gets important training in habits of industry, but this will not suffice to develop and maintain a contented rural people. The boys and girls must be given a chance to grow intellectually and socially. Only on this basis can they become economically efficient.

Another matter of vital importance to the State is the training of children of foreign extraction. Owing to labor problems truck farmers are employing foreigners chiefly. They have had little or no training in common with American ideals. If the function of our government is to train its citizens for loyal and

efficient service under a democratic form of government, it should see that these foreign children are given an elementary school training in the American school.

Another phase of our educational method seems worthy of mention. In the spring of 1917 meetings were held, after the closing hour of school, in six of our largest schools. Notices were sent to about thirty-five of the most troublesome parents of each school to attend the meeting. They were given the option of attending or appearing before a magistrate on the charge of violating the Compulsory Attendance Law. About 95 per cent. of the parents attended the meeting, and others sent reasonable excuses for their non-attendance. The Chief Attendance Officer devoted about one-half hour to a discussion of the aims of compulsory attendance and the need for regularity of school attendance. The meeting was then open for a conference of parents and teachers. Many of these parents had been in the school building for the first time. An opportunity had been provided for each parent to discuss his particular problem with the teacher. Subsequent reports of the teachers have convinced us that such meetings are of great value to the compulsory attendance work.

The transfer system has been also very helpful in the management of incorrigible and truant children. Our experience leads us to know that the cause, at its source, is frequently found to be with some other member of the family. It had been the practice of pupils to move from one school to another for trivial reasons. This was a costly practice, but the demoralizing effect upon the schools was more serious. Principals have not been permitted to transfer where there has been a breach of discipline. This is a function of the Chief Attendance Officer and his two assistants. The results have been interesting and profitable to all concerned. In some instances teachers were at fault, and it was found wise to transfer the children; but, usually, the causes were with the parents—in their lack of control or failure to co-operate with the teachers in the management of the children.

The provision of law which requires children between the ages of thirteen and seventeen to attend a minimum of one hundred days each year, or until the completion of the seventh grade, has been very beneficial. Children who were slow in school work or who had been neglected were given additional opportunities to secure an education. But in all probability the most valuable asset to the school system will be the training of parents to see the importance of sending children to school regularly between the ages of six and thirteen.

No attempt has been made to enumerate all the causes of non-attendance or to explain the method of dealing with each. The aim has been to set forth the plan of work to explain a few of the big causes that reduce attendance, with their effects. An attempt has also been made to emphasize the importance of compulsory school attendance, both from an economic and social point of view.

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